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Lt. Governor



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Deputy to the Chairperson

**TESTIMONY OF SCOTT E. ENRIGHT**  
**CHAIRPERSON, BOARD OF AGRICULTURE**

**BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE**

February 12, 2015  
8:30 A.M.  
CONFERENCE ROOM 312

**HOUSE BILL NO. 573**  
**RELATING TO AGRICULTURE**

Chairpersons Tsuji and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on House Bill No. 573, which proposes to establish the Hawaii good agricultural practices program to develop and support good agricultural practices for Hawaii farms growing food products. The department supports the intent of this bill.

The department currently has the authority and conducts voluntary audits of farms and facilities on good agricultural practices. This activity is conducted through a cooperative agreement with the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), and an agreement with PrimusLabs, a private certifying agency.

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) is currently reviewing comments received on the revised provisions on the Standards for the Growing, Harvesting, Packing and Holding Produce for Human Consumption, under the Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA). The USDA is also working with the FDA to ensure that the USDA's Good Agricultural Practices program is aligned with the FSMA regulations.

Additionally, the department has been working in partnership with the University of Hawaii, College of Tropical of Agriculture and Human Resources, who provides



education and training of farmers implementing good agricultural practices. Future plans include developing a consumer-based program to provide information on recommended safe handling practices, and simpler, more efficient method of record keeping and traceability for the farmers.

We welcome additional funding and resources to continue our efforts in advocating and assisting in educating our farmers on good agricultural practices.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.

onishi3 - Timothy

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From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
Sent: Tuesday, February 10, 2015 2:59 PM  
To: AGRtestimony  
Cc: elle.cochran@mauicounty.us  
Subject: Submitted testimony for HB573 on Feb 12, 2015 08:30AM

**HB573**

Submitted on: 2/10/2015

Testimony for AGR on Feb 12, 2015 08:30AM in Conference Room 312

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Elle Cochran	Maui County Council Member	Support	No

Comments: I support HB 573

Please note that testimony submitted less than 24 hours prior to the hearing, improperly identified, or directed to the incorrect office, may not be posted online or distributed to the committee prior to the convening of the public hearing.

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February 12, 2015

HEARING BEFORE THE  
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE

TESTIMONY ON HB 573  
RELATING TO HAWAII GOOD AGRICULTURAL PRACTICES

Room 312  
8:30 AM

Aloha Chair Tsuji, Vice Chair Onishi, and Members of the Committee:

I am Christopher Manfredi, President of the Hawaii Farm Bureau Federation (HFB). Organized since 1948, the HFB is comprised of 1,932 farm family members statewide, and serves as Hawaii's voice of agriculture to protect, advocate and advance the social, economic and educational interests of our diverse agricultural community.

**HFB strongly supports HB 573**, which establishes the Hawaii good agricultural practices program to develop and support good agricultural practices for Hawaii farms growing agricultural food products.

While Hawaii's farmers recognize the critical importance of food safety, the current system of third-party food safety certification is unwieldy, expensive, and often impractical for the many small and diverse farms that make up the major part of Hawaii's food producers.

The recently passed Food Safety Modernization Act directs the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) to create new, stronger regulations to prevent bacterial contamination of produce and to improve traceability of farm products. FDA's proposed rules were distributed for public comment in early 2013, and due to the large number of comments received, the FDA revised their proposed rules. Public comment for the revised proposed rules were distributed and comments were due in December 2014. The comments for the revised proposed rules are currently being reviewed by the FDA.

Nationwide, and particularly in Hawaii, there is a great deal of concern among farmers and farm organizations regarding the impact of the new rules. Farmers are confused as to which rules apply to their individual farms, what practices will satisfy the new rules, and what the cost of these practices will be. Further, Hawaii's climatic, social, and economic circumstances differ from those on the U.S. mainland, as do many of Hawaii's food crops,

so criteria established for the U.S. as a whole may not be appropriate for Hawaiian conditions.

FSMA allows states to establish food safety criteria, provided that the alternative procedures can be shown scientifically to be at least as safe as the procedures prescribed by FDA's standards. HB 573 proposed program would encourage the Department of Agriculture to develop science- and risk-based good agricultural practices that should meet these standards, while allowing for the diversity of crops, farm sizes, and farming practices present in Hawaii. It also would provide education and training for farmers to learn and implement these practices. The certification program would likely be more practical, more cost-effective, more farmer-friendly, and better suited to Hawaii's unique situation than the current patchwork of third-party certification and impending, but uncertain, new regulations. The ultimate result should be more, and safer, local food for Hawaii's consumers.

We therefore urge you to pass HB 573 and help Hawaii's farmers continue to produce safe, wholesome produce.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this matter of importance to Hawaii's farmers.

onishi3 - Timothy

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From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
Sent: Monday, February 09, 2015 9:13 PM  
To: AGRtestimony  
Cc: leimomikekina@gmail.com  
Subject: \*Submitted testimony for HB573 on Feb 12, 2015 08:30AM\*

**HB573**

Submitted on: 2/9/2015

Testimony for AGR on Feb 12, 2015 08:30AM in Conference Room 312

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Leimomi Dierks	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

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From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
Sent: Thursday, February 12, 2015 7:43 AM  
To: AGRtestimony  
Cc: akamaimom@gmail.com  
Subject: Submitted testimony for HB573 on Feb 12, 2015 08:30AM

**HB573**

Submitted on: 2/12/2015

Testimony for AGR on Feb 12, 2015 08:30AM in Conference Room 312

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Felicia Cowden	Individual	Comments Only	No

Comments: This bill HB 573 is vague in defining "good agricultural practices." It is hard to tell if it is designed to support small farms or to crush them. The Federal Food Safety Modernization Act is designed for industrial agriculture and is in defiance with nature. Nature truly would be outlawed by FSMA. The state should not create barriers for healthy, natural farming methods. FSMA is a thinly veiled effort to crush the small- scale organic movement. The Tester Amendment allowed for reluctant passage through protecting suppliers of local foods, which is now reaching its sundown. The state of Hawaii needs to support the small farmer and neighborhood agriculture by honoring natures cycles of plant cultivation rather than sterilizing everything with chemicals. Be pono. Support natural farming.

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